



Hood Canal Bridge Retrofit and East-half Replacement Project

Sept. 2006

Helping Drivers During the 2009 Hood Canal Bridge Closure



What is WSDOT doing?

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) will replace the east-half floating sections and transition trusses on the east and west ends of the Hood Canal Bridge in May-June 2009. The bridge will be closed to traffic during the six weeks required to complete the work.

Helping drivers

To keep traffic moving to and from the Olympic Peninsula, WSDOT engineers planned for the construction of the new east-half to be completed at existing marine facilities. The bridge will only close for six weeks instead of the entire three and one-half year construction cycle.

Keeping traffic moving

WSDOT understands the Hood Canal Bridge is an economic lifeline for the people and businesses of the Olympic Peninsula and a gateway for visitors to the region. That's why we are taking extra efforts to keep traffic moving during the closure.

WSDOT will implement the mitigation plan recommended by the Peninsula Regional Transportation and Planning Organization to assist bridge users in getting to their destination during the bridge closure. The five major plan elements are:

1. Alternate Driving Routes Improvements and Traffic Control

- Permanent highway improvements completed before the closure to help traffic on the alternate driving route flow smoothly.
- Temporary improvements to state highway locations that would experience the most traffic during the bridge closure.
- Incident Management Plan implementation, including use of Incident Response Trucks, maintenance trucks, WSP patrols, signage at key decision points, highway advisory radio, variable message signs radio alerts to assist drivers.

2. Transportation Options

- A passenger-only ferry (POF) service across Hood Canal, between South Point in Jefferson County and Port Gamble in Kitsap County.
- Ferry terminals and parking for the POF service.
- Transit service from the POF ferry terminals.

3. Rideshare Opportunities

- Assistance with finding rideshare opportunities prior to and during the closure by utilizing the existing Puget Sound Rideshare database system.
- Public Outreach Plan implementation, including static rideshare promotional signing along the highway, informational posters, e-mail rider alerts, web site pages and brochures.

4. Medical Transportation Assistance

- An on-call transport service from Port Gamble to Seattle, Bremerton, and Poulsbo for people who have medical appointments in those areas.
- Community outreach with Emergency Medical Services groups to facilitate region-wide planning and driver preparedness.

5. Public Outreach

- Community outreach tactics such as newspaper and radio ads, brochures, posters, direct-mail postcards and community presentations.
- Distribution of information through tourism and business interests, local community groups and the Peninsula Regional Transportation Planning Organization.
- An aggressive media relations plan featuring closure information.

The specific method of closure mitigation plan implementation could change between now and the actual 2009 bridge closure. WSDOT will continue developing plans for the passenger-only ferry and all that it entails, as well as assess recommended temporary improvements. Coordination will continue with the many groups that have an interest in the bridge closure. Most importantly, the public will be kept informed about the project and the many options that will be available to them during the 2009 bridge closure.

How drivers can help

To prepare for the bridge closures, drivers can:

- Plan trips ahead of time to find the best route.
- Schedule as many trips as possible for before or after the closure.
- Visit the project website, www.hoodcanalbridge.com, to stay up-to-date on closure planning efforts.

